



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Needles Field Office  
101 W. Spikes Road  
Needles, CA 92363  
[www.ca.blm.gov/needles](http://www.ca.blm.gov/needles)

NOV 20 2002

In Reply Refer To:  
8510(P)  
(CA-690.28)

Dear Public Land User:

The Needles Field Office BLM manages eighteen wilderness areas in the California desert. Wilderness is defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964 as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man....an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence." The act also prohibits (with some exceptions) certain uses such as permanent or temporary roads, motorized vehicles or equipment, forms of mechanical transport, and structures.

One of the major issues associated with the wilderness areas we manage is illegal vehicle use. The eighteen areas we manage were designated by the California Desert Protection Act of 1994. Prior to designation, some vehicle use did occur in these areas, and the vehicle tracks that remain today are evidence of this use. These tracks enter wilderness and promote illegal vehicle use. The signing of wilderness boundaries and closed routes is a relatively inexpensive, immediate management technique and has been effective in some cases. However, often the signs are ignored or even destroyed. When resources are available, our other management options for preventing illegal vehicle use are route rehabilitation, natural barriers, gates, or fences.

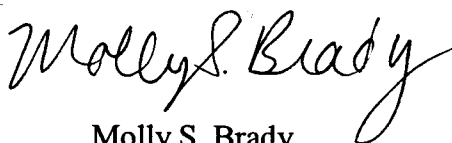
The purpose of this letter is to gather information from the public on any uses such as hiking, hunting, rock collecting, and horseback riding that these routes may provide access for. This information will help us to make sensible management decisions and use the appropriate option to prevent illegal vehicle use. Our long term goal and preferred management option for the majority of routes is route rehabilitation because it retains the primeval character of wilderness and is the most effective technique. However, a route that is commonly used for hiking or horseback riding we might want rehabilitate into a single-track trail.

We are currently preparing a proposal for an Environmental Assessment on route rehabilitation in six of our eighteen wilderness areas. Therefore, information on these wilderness areas is imperative at this time, but information on routes in our other wilderness areas is also valuable and will be considered in future proposals. The six wilderness areas are Stateline, Mesquite, North Mesquite Mountains, Stepladder Mountains, Turtle Mountains, and Sheephole Valley.

Maps of these six wilderness areas indicating the entry points of the routes of particular interest are located on the internet at [www.ca.blm.gov/needles](http://www.ca.blm.gov/needles). If you do not have access to the web, paper copies are available (refer to contact information below). We appreciate any feedback you can provide us with and look forward to hearing from you. In your response, please include the exact location of route(s), type of use, and the approximate number of days per year you use the route(s).

If you received this notification via United States Postal Service and would prefer future correspondence via e-mail, please contact this office at [ca690@ca.blm.gov](mailto:ca690@ca.blm.gov) with your name, address, and e-mail address. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Christi Oliver, Wilderness Coordinator, at (760) 326-7021, by email at [coliver@ca.blm.gov](mailto:coliver@ca.blm.gov), or at the address in the letterhead. Thanks for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Molly S. Brady". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Molly S. Brady  
Field Manager